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BY PATRICK A. MALONE

KANSAS CITY, KAN. (UPI) -- A MONTH-LONG COMPUTER ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUSLY UNDISCLOSED FBI BALLISTICS EVIDENCE OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S ASSASSINATION HAS FAILED TO SHOW CONCLUSIVELY WHETHER THE WARREN COMMISSION'S SINGLE-ASSASSIN THEORY WAS RIGHT, A PATHOLOGIST SAID TODAY.

DR. JOEL NICHOLS, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PATHOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS MEDICAL CENTER, SAID HE AND DR. WILLIAM GUINN, DIRECTOR OF ATOMIC RESEARCH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-IRVINE, WILL FILE ANOTHER LAWSUIT TO TRY TO OBTAIN THE ORIGINAL BULLET FRAGMENTS FOR MORE SOPHISTICATED TESTS THAN WERE POSSIBLE WHEN THE FIRST TESTS WERE MADE IN 1964.

LAST MONTH AFTER A SIX-YEAR LEGAL FIGHT, NICHOLS OBTAINED THE RESULTS OF NEUTRON ACTIVATION ANALYSIS TESTS CONDUCTED BY THE FBI IN 1964 ON BULLET FRAGMENTS RECOVERED FROM KENNEDY'S HEAD, FORMER GOV. JOHN B. CONNALLY'S WRIST, A STRETCHER AT PARKLAND HOSPITAL AND THE PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE.

NICHOLS LOST HIS ORIGINAL SUIT AGAINST THE FBI AND THE U.S. ARCHIVIST TO OBTAIN RESULTS OF THE BALLISTICS TESTS AND THE ORIGINAL FRAGMENTS FOR FURTHER STUDY IN AN ATOMIC REACTOR. UNDER A SUIT FILED IN FEBRUARY AFTER AMENDMENTS TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT TOOK EFFECT, THE FBI TURNED OVER 73 PAGES OF RAW DATA FROM THE ORIGINAL TESTS.

NEUTRON ACTIVATION ANALYSIS IS A PROCESS IN WHICH SMALL PARTICLES OF METAL ARE EXPOSED TO NUCLEAR RADIATION IN ORDER TO OBTAIN WITH PRECISION TO A MILLIONTH PART THE AMOUNT OF EACH ELEMENT PRESENT IN THE SAMPLE. IT IS SO SOPHISTICATED THAT ANALYSTS CAN SOMETIMES TELL BY DIFFERENCES IN METALLIC CONTENT WHETHER TWO PIECES OF METAL CAME FROM THE SAME BULLET, SINCE THE METAL CONTENT OF INDIVIDUAL BULLETS VARIES SLIGHTLY.

THE FBI USED THE PROCESS ON THE BULLET FRAGMENTS RECOVERED AFTER THE ASSASSINATION TO TRY TO DETERMINE WHETHER THEY COULD HAVE COME FROM DIFFERENT BULLETS OR DIFFERENT RIFLES.

THE EVIDENCE WAS NEVER TURNED OVER TO THE WARREN COMMISSION, AND ON JULY 8, 1964, THEN DIRECTOR J. EDGAR HOOVER WROTE TO J. LEE RANKIN, GENERAL COUNSEL TO THE COMMISSION:

"WHILE MINOR VARIATIONS IN COMPOSITION WERE FOUND BY THIS METHOD, THESE WERE NOT CONSIDERED SUFFICIENT TO PERMIT POSITIVELY DIFFERENTIATING AMONG THE LARGER BULLET FRAGMENTS AND THUS POSITIVELY DETERMINING FROM WHICH OF THE LARGER BULLET FRAGMENTS ANY GIVEN SMALL LEAD FRAGMENT MAY HAVE COME."

THE LETTER WAS NOT PUBLISHED IN THE COMMISSION'S 26 VOLUMES OF EVIDENCE, AND CRITICS WHO LATER DISCOVERED IT IN THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES CITED IT AS SHOWING THE FBI HAD WITHHELD CRUCIAL EVIDENCE.

THE EVIDENCE COULD HAVE BEEN CRUCIAL, BECAUSE THE WARREN COMMISSION'S SINGLE-ASSASSIN THEORY HINGED ON THE BULLET THAT THE SAME BULLET WHICH CAUSED KENNEDY'S THROAT WOUND ALSO CAUSED WOUNDS IN CONNALLY'S BODY.

THE TWO PROFESSORS SAID THE DATA OBTAINED FROM THE FBI IS INCOMPLETE, CONTAINS ERRORS AND HAS ESSENTIAL FACTORS MISSING."

THEY CONCLUDED THAT THE FRAGMENTS COULD HAVE COME FROM THE SAME TYPE OF AMMUNITION BUT, "SINCE THE TRACE METAL CONTENTS RANGE CLOSE IT DOES NOT PRECLUDE THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE GOVERNOR AND PRESIDENT WERE HIT WITH SEPARATE SHOTS FROM THE SAME TYPE OF AMMUNITION OR DIFFERENT AMMUNITION WITH THE SAME TRACE METAL CONTENT."

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